

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANKARA 07076 151111Z

43

ACTION INR-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 /020 W

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R 150950Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO AMEMBASSY ROME

SECSTATE WASHDC 4893

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINR TU IT

SUBJECT: BIO INFO ON SEMIH AKBIL, NEW TURKISH AMBASSADOR

TO ITALY

1. ALTHOUGH THE APPOINTMENT OF SEMIH AKBIL AS AMBASSADOR TO ITALY HAS YET TO BE CONFIRMED BY PUBLICATION IN THE OFFICIAL GAZETTA, OUR FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES REGARD CONFIRMATION AS ASSURED. WE ARE THEREFORE PROVIDING THE FOLLOWING BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:

A. THIS WILL BE AKBIL'S FIRST AMBASSADORIAL ASSIGNMENT. IT FOLLOWS FIVE VERY ACTIVE YEARS AS THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S SPOKESMAN.

B. BORN IN 1927 IN ANKARA, AKBIL GRADUATED FROM THE LAW FACULTY OF ANKARA UNIVERSITY AND ENTERED THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IN 1952. HIS FIRST TWO FOREIGN POSTS WERE LONDON (1954-57) AND WASHINGTON (1957-61). RETURNING TO ANKARA IN 1961, HE SERVED IN SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS OF THE MINISTRY BEFORE BECOMING STAFF AIDE TO THE LATE PRESIDENT GURSEL IN 1963. HE NEXT SERVED AS NO. 2 IN TURKEY'S MISSION TO THE OECD, 1965-71. HE TOOK UP HIS PRESENT DUTIES AS INFORMATION DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR IN 1971, ADDING TO THEM IN 1972 THE DIRECTORSHIP OF THE PRIME MINISTRY'S PRESS AND INFORMATION OFFICE.

C. AKBIL HAS BEEN DIVORCED, AND HAS REMARRIED. HIS PRESENT WIFE, FATMA, IS AN EXPERT ON TURKISH FABRICS AND IS WRITING

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PAGE 02 ANKARA 07076 151111Z

A BOOK ON THE SUBJECT. A CHARMING LADY, SHE RECEIVED SOME

EDUCATION IN TEXTILES IN ENGLAND AND SPEAKS GOOD ENGLISH.  
HE HAS A HOBBY OF COLLECTING ANTIQUES AND IS AN EXPERT ON ANTIQUE  
ORIENTAL RUGS AND SILVER. HE IS FLUENT IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH.

D. AKBIL HAS BEEN A CAPABLE AND EFFECTIVE PRESS SPOKESMAN.  
HE HAS EXCELLENT RAPPORT WITH TURKISH AND FOREIGN JOURNALISTS AND  
IS RESPECTED BY THE ANKARA PRESS CORPS. HE HAS GENERALLY ENDURED  
WITH GRACE THE USUAL FRUSTRATIONS OF A PRESS OFFICER, BUT AT LEAST ON  
ONE OCCASION WAS REPORTED TO HAVE OFFERED HIS RESIGNATION  
BECAUSE HIS SUPERIORS IN THE MINISTRY DID NOT KEEP HIM  
ADEQUATELY INFORMED.

E. AKBIL IS PRO-U.S. AND IN THE PAST HAS BEEN COOPERATIVE  
WITH THIS EMBASSY AND USIS. HE ENJOYS THE COMPANY OF AMERICANS  
AND HAS PLEASANT MEMORIES OF HIS SERVICE IN WASHINGTON. WE  
BELIEVE EMBASSY ROME WILL FIND HIM A USEFUL ADDITION TO THE  
ROME DIPLOMATIC CORPS.

FRANCIS

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, AMBASSADORS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 15 SEP 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ShawDG  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976ANKARA07076  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760348-0197  
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**Line Count:** 79  
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**Office:** ACTION INR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ShawDG  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 05 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <05 MAY 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <31 AUG 2004 by ShawDG>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** BIO INFO ON SEMIH AKBIL, NEW TURKISH AMBASSADOR TO ITALY  
**TAGS:** PINR, TU, IT, (SEMIH AKBIL)  
**To:** ROME STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006